



## CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY RESULTS

### -what members said about PERSI in 2007-

In January 2007, PERSI staff began giving customer service surveys to members who came into a PERSI office for assistance. The goal of any customer service survey is to learn more about what an organization is doing right, and to identify those areas where improvements can be made. PERSI is grateful to members for taking time to tell us about their experience while visiting one of our offices.

Members with and without appointments were provided with a survey. Although members were asked to complete the survey before leaving the office, if that wasn't possible, they were provided with a postage-paid return envelope so the survey could be mailed back to PERSI. Nearly half the surveys were given out by the staff in the PERSI Answer Center (PAC), which was not surprising since PAC is the first point of contact for members visiting a PERSI office. The 2007 results are outlined below:

(1) The majority of members (73%) visited a PERSI office regarding a retirement issue. The next most frequent reason for visiting PERSI was to ask general questions. This was followed closely by the need for assistance with the Choice Plan 401(k).

(2) All members (100%) said PERSI staff met or exceeded expectations in terms of being courteous and helpful. This exceeded the 90% benchmark set by PERSI in its strategic plan.

(3) Members with appointments rarely had to wait once they arrived for their scheduled appointment with PERSI. Those without an appointment (walk-ins) waited, on average, fewer than 5 minutes before being assisted.

(4) Approximately two-thirds of the members who responded to the survey said they had previously contacted PERSI about the same problem or issue. PERSI is reviewing the data further to determine if the staff needs to clarify its responses to members, if the members had new questions about a previous issue, or if the questions should have been directed elsewhere initially because they were outside PERSI's area of responsibility (e.g., insurance).

(5) Most members (87%) responded it was very easy to make an appointment with PERSI.

(6) Of the members who responded, 99% said the knowledge of the PERSI staff met or exceeded expectations.

(7) When rating their overall experience during the office visit, 99% of members who responded said PERSI met or exceeded expectations.

(8) Of members who expressed dissatisfaction with PERSI, the reasons varied. PERSI will review the comments and determine what action can be taken or what improvements can be made.

The narrative responses from the survey are being reviewed to ensure PERSI understands what members want and/or expect in the future. This information will also help PERSI advance its Customer Service initiative during 2008. PERSI's goal is to increase the number of surveys distributed in 2008 and reinforce the culture of service excellence within the organization.

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# Insights

## STATE OF IDAHO TAXES AND FORM 39-R

Thanks to a retiree who called with questions about his Idaho tax return, PERSI is able to draw attention to a form used by the State of Idaho for tax deductions for Idaho resident taxpayers. Form 39-R is an Idaho Supplemental Schedule for Form 40. Idaho taxpayers – retirees and others – who do not itemize on their federal tax return can still claim some deductions on their state tax return using this form.

### Idaho Doesn't Tax Social Security Benefits

Idaho does not tax Social Security benefits the way the federal government does. It appears many Idaho taxpayers are unaware of the deductions available to them, so this article highlights two lines from state Form 39-R that might provide some tax relief to PERSI retirees. For more information about this form or tax deductions in general, go to the Idaho State Tax Commission Web site at <http://tax.idaho.gov/>.

### Form 39-R

Line 7: This is where tax filers should enter the taxable amount of their Social Security benefit as shown on line 20b of federal Form 1040, or on line 14b of federal Form 1040A. (Do not enter the amount reported on line 20a of Form 1040, or line 14a of Form 1040A.)

Line 18: This is where tax filers should enter the amount they paid for health insurance premiums for themselves, their spouse, and any dependents if the premiums haven't already been deducted from their income.

If a taxpayer claimed a deduction for their health insurance premiums on their federal Form 1040, Schedule A, they'll need to use the worksheet found in the Form 39-R instructions on the Tax Commission Web site to calculate the deduction allowed.

There are a number of exceptions to taking the health insurance deduction:

- **Idaho Medical Savings Account** - No deduction is allowed if money from a medical saving account (MSA) was used to pay health insurance premiums.
- **Salary Reduction Plans** - Premiums paid through a cafeteria plan or other salary-reduction arrangement cannot be deducted.
- **Business Deductions** - Premiums already taken as a business expense cannot be deducted again.
- **Social Security and Medicare A and B** - No deduction is allowed for employer-required Social Security Medicare Part A. If someone voluntarily enrolled in Medicare Part B, or isn't covered under Social Security and voluntarily enrolled in Medicare Part A, the premium may be deducted.
- **Idaho Standard Deduction** - Taxpayers who do not itemize their deductions for Idaho income tax purposes, and instead take the standard deduction, do not have to reduce their health insurance costs by any amount claimed as a federal itemized deduction.

Be sure to carefully read and follow the instructions for completing Form 39-R.

Anyone who thinks they may have overpaid their state taxes because they were not aware of the health insurance premium or other deductions, can file an amended return. Instructions for filing an amended return can be found on the Idaho State Tax Commission Web site. For additional information about Form 39-R, or if you have questions about a tax return, call Taxpayer Services at the Idaho State Tax Commission at (208) 334-7660 in the Boise area or toll-free 1 (800) 972-7660 from elsewhere in the state.

# THE BENEFITS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

## - National Senior Health and Fitness Day is in May-

National Senior Health and Fitness Day is May 28, 2008, so mark your calendar. Each year, more than 150,000 seniors participate in activities at nearly 1,000 locations across the country. The goal is to keep older Americans fit and healthy. The event is organized by the Mature Market Resource Center, a national information clearinghouse for the older adult market. Typical activities include fitness walks, low-impact exercises, health screenings and health information workshops. To arrange an event in your area or to learn more, call Tina Godin toll-free at 1(800) 828-8225 Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (CT) or e-mail her at [info@fitnessday.com](mailto:info@fitnessday.com).

### Unexpected Benefits of Exercise

Older adults who fail to maintain an active lifestyle may be putting their health and independence at risk. Besides feeling better, there are a number of “hidden” benefits to exercising just 30 minutes a day, several days a week.

- **Better Balance**

When you strengthen your core muscles, you increase your stability and improve coordination.

- **Relieve Arthritis Pain**

Swimming or water aerobics can strengthen muscles and challenge bones without placing undue stress on your joints...and may reduce arthritis pain.

- **Strengthen Bones and Muscles**

Weight-bearing exercise such as walking, jogging or weight lifting can help prevent calcium loss in

your bones, which keeps them stronger and less susceptible to breakage; strengthening exercises can also increase metabolism, which can help keep your weight and blood sugar in check.

- **Clearer Thinking**

Activities that require concentration such as biking, tennis, or dancing improve mental sharpness and keep you alert by increasing blood flow to your brain.

- **Improved Circulation**

Any exercise that increases your heart rate will not only improve your circulation, but may also dissolve blood clots. A cardio routine in the morning is a great way to jumpstart your day.

- **Easier Digestion**

Physical activity stimulates intestinal muscles, which helps move food through your system faster. As a result, less food will be stored as fat.

According to the National Institute of Health, staying physically active and exercising regularly can help prevent or delay many diseases and disabilities. Moderate exercise and physical activity can even improve the health of people who are frail or who have diseases that accompany aging.

Naturally, before starting an exercise program you should check with your doctor.

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## USING YOUR TAX REBATE CHECK

The federal government hopes you'll spend your tax rebate check - aka “Economic Stimulus Payment” - to boost the economy, but you may want to pay down debt or add to your savings plan instead. Paying down debt can improve your financial situation, and putting aside money for a rainy day can help you establish or maintain your financial security.

How do you get a rebate check? To qualify for a rebate, you must file a 2007 tax return. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will use your 2007 tax return to determine your eligibility and calculate your rebate amount. Those who qualify will begin receiving their rebates in May. If you file your tax return with direct deposit, your rebate will also be issued via direct deposit. Rebates will be distributed through the end of the year. Even if you normally do not file a tax return, to determine your eligibility for a rebate you must file a federal return, but not necessarily a state return. To find out more, visit the IRS Web site at [www.irs.gov/index.html](http://www.irs.gov/index.html), click on the “Rebate Questions?” link on the Home page.

**RETIREE**  
**PERS**pectives  
Public Employee Retirement System of Idaho

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## PERSI INVESTMENT NEWS

*as of March 18, 2008\**

### Value of the Fund:

\$10,990,220,533

### Fiscal Year Change in Market Value:

(\$472,357,880)

### Fiscal Year-to-Date Returns:

-3.9%

### Month-to-Date Returns:

-2.0%

\*Posted monthly on PERSI Web site: [www.persi.idaho.gov](http://www.persi.idaho.gov)



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